BRITISH COLUMBIA'S

Small Business Roundtable

11th Annual Report to Government 2016

SMALL BUSINESS IS BIG BUSINESS

GROWING THE ECONOMY:

Fostering the growth and success of small business benefits all British Columbians through increased job creation, innovation and economic competitiveness.

KEY STATS:

- 98% of businesses in the province are small businesses
- 388,500 total small businesses
- 51% are self employed with no employees
- 83 small business/1000 ppl (average is 70.3)
- 35% of GDP (above the Canadian avg. 32%)

KEY TRENDS:

- **Fastest growing sectors 2014–2015 (businesses added)**
  Professional/Science/Technology: +528
  Food Services/Drinking: +338
  specialty Trade Contractors: +324

KEY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:

- **BC Jobs Plan**
  www.bcjobsplan.ca
- **Small Business Accord**
  www.itt.gov.bc.ca/tbaccord

The Small Business Accord and its principles were established to help foster a progressive business culture where government initiatives support current and future generations of small business owners across British Columbia.

GROWING ENTREPRENEURS:

Small businesses represent the backbone of B.C. communities and cross over all business sectors, from retail stores and doctors' offices to computer programming, and even the family farm.

NUMBER OF SMALL BUSINESSES BY REGION, 2015

REGION	POP.	# OF SMALL BUSINESSES
1 Vancouver Island/Coast	784,006	67,387
2 Mainland/Southcoast	2,834,194	236,032
3 Thompson-Okanagan	539,747	46,467
4 Kootenay	148,770	12,185
5 Cariboo	156,140	10,881
6 North Coast + 7 Nechako	97,649	7,706
8 Northeast	70,796	7,842
British Columbia	4,631,302	388,500

KEY TRENDS:

- B.C. small business workers have the smallest wage gaps in the country, compared to large business workers
- 38% of all business owners in B.C. are women, above the national average

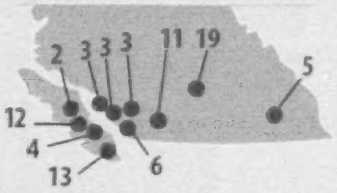
KEY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:

- **Aboriginal entrepreneurship**
  https://news.gov.bc.ca/11913
- **Celebrate Entrepreneurship Award**
  http://cbc.ca/2015/10/01/new-celebrate-entrepreneurship-award-launched/
- **Job Makers Success Stories**
  www.bcjobsplan.ca

GROWING PARTNERSHIPS:

By collaborating with government we will identify actions that we can take to promote growth, reduce red tape and increase economic competitiveness.

MOBILE BUSINESS LICENCE AGREEMENTS (PARTICIPATING COMMUNITIES)



KEY TRENDS:

- 87% of the province by population has BizPaL service coverage

OPEN for BUSINESS Awards

program of the Province of British Columbia

Congratulations to the five ***Open for Business Award*** *winners for 2016: Delta, Tofino, Lake Country, Victoria and Nisga'a Lisims Government.*

KEY TRENDS:

- The Open for Business Awards recognize Municipal, First Nation and Regional District governments undertaking initiatives and partnerships to reduce cost and complexity of doing business in British Columbia
- This year, 21 submissions were received from five B.C. economic regions, including 2 new Regional Districts and 3 new Municipal applicants

KEY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:

- **Mobile Business Licence**
  www.resourcecentre.gov.bc.ca/mobile.html
- **BizPaL**
  www.bizpal.ca
- **Red Tape Reduction**
  https://forms.gov.bc.ca/help-reduce-red-tape/

GROWING MARKETS:

- Small business exporters account for almost 86% of all B.C. exporters
- In 2014, about $12.9 billion worth of goods were exported out of the country

WHERE GOODS FLOW

Small Businesses	Business Count
USA	53%
Non USA	27%
Both USA and Non USA	20%

KEY STATS:

- Small business exporters in B.C. ship almost as much to Asia (45%) as to the United States (47%)

KEY TRENDS:

- Between June 2009 and June 2014, the real estate sales and services sector and the high technology sector recorded the strongest growth

KEY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:

- **Import-Export Guide**
  www.resourcecentre.gov.bc.ca/pdf/ImpExpGuideEng.pdf
- **Trade and Invest BC**
  www.britishcolumbia.ca

GROWING THE WORK FORCE:

1. Provide a head start to hands-on learning in schools
2. A shift in education and training to better match with jobs in demand
3. A stronger partnership with industry and labour to deliver training and apprenticeships

KEYS STATS:

- 55% of private sector jobs are provided by small business, employing over 1 million British Columbians
- Nearly 32% of wages paid by small business (#1 in Canada - 27% avg.)

KEY GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES:

- **Work BC**
  www.workbc.ca
- **BC Skills for Jobs Blue Print**
  www.workbc.ca/skills

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Who We Are... small business owners and advocates for B.C.'s small business community

Samantha Howard
Director, B.C.,
Canadian Federation of
Independent Business
LANGFORD

Ian Tostenson
President/CEO,
British Columbia Restaurant
and Food Services Association
VANCOUVER

Cybele Negris
CEO & Co-founder,
Webnames.ca Inc.
Vice-Chair,
Small Business Roundtable
VANCOUVER

Robert (Bob) J. Redden
Partner & President,
Environmental Dynamics Inc.
PRINCE GEORGE

Sue Adams
Managing Partner,
Pemberton Valley
Supermarket Ltd.
WHISTLER

Chief Judy Wilson
Chief,
Neskonlith Indian Band
CHASE

Mark Startup
Vice President,
Retail Council of Canada
VANCOUVER

MJ Whitemarsh
CEO,
Whitemarsh Enterprises
SOOKE

John Cameron
Chief Executive Officer,
ROCK SOLID Business
Coaching Inc.
LANGLEY

Jill Doucette
Owner,
Synergy Enterprises
VICTORIA

Val Litwin
President, CEO,
B.C. Chamber of Commerce
VANCOUVER

Ashley Ramsay
Founder & CEO,
Yeti Farm Creative
KELOWNA

Sean Surerus
Vice President,
Surerus Pipeline Inc.
FORT ST. JOHN

Angie Barnard
Founder,
The Network Hub
NANAIMO

Randy Richmond
Vice President and Partner,
Spearhead.ca
NELSON

Ingrid Hope
Owner & President,
Hall Printing
TRAIL AND NELSON

The Roundtable is here to help. For inquiries contact the RoundtableSecretariat@gov.bc.ca who will connect you with the Roundtable member in your area.

A Message from the Chair

Across British Columbia small businesses are growing, innovating and making our communities more resilient to global economic forces. For some of our remote communities the only businesses around for hundreds of miles are family-run small businesses, providing food, clothing, services and shelter to visitors. For many communities, small businesses are providing tourists with unique cultural and eco-tourism experiences. In our resource–based communities small businesses are helping their communities diversify their economies by growing their creative sectors and finding new markets for their resources and services.

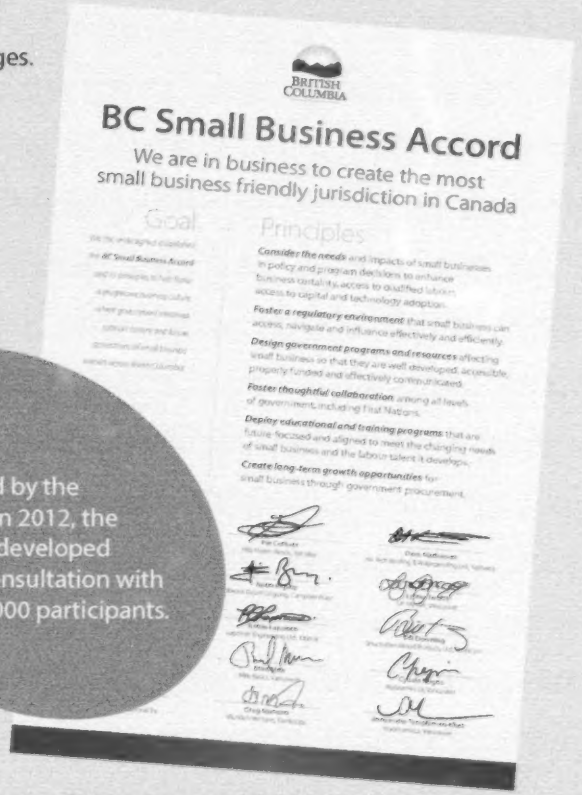
Since the Jobs Plan was launched in 2012 the Province has been working to grow the creative sector and others through initiatives like the #BCTECH Strategy and the launch of Red Tape Reduction Day, with 37 regulations repealed, reaffirming B.C.'s leadership in removing outdated and unnecessary regulations.

In support of government's effort to establish British Columbia as the most business-friendly jurisdiction in the country, the Small Business Roundtable embarked on a new round of Regional Consultations in 2016 to further the **BC Small Business Accord (Accord)**. These consultations held in Coquitlam, Nanaimo and Kelowna will help determine the Roundtable recommendations regarding government's focus, making it easier for business to do business so the sector can thrive and grow. These consultations will also determine if those recommendations require new programs or policy changes.

Although we already have some ideas that we can build on through our Four 'A Grade' Initiatives in the Roundtable's 10th Annual Report, we recognize we need to hear from small businesses by consulting with them in their communities to help identify solutions which create opportunities for small business.

We know when government is fully committed to innovation by consulting with the small business sector great things are possible as demonstrated by the BC Small Business Accord and the Province receiving in its 5th 'A-Grade' from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business January 2016, in part because of government's commitment to reducing red tape and regulatory burden, including the modernized regulatory reform framework, red tape public engagement process, and the liquor policy reform process in 2015/16.

Moving forward, among other important work, the Roundtable will engage with the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of the Environment to ensure that the small business sector is consulted in support of our government's tax competitiveness and climate action agenda so that the small business sector can continue to grow jobs and economic opportunities across British Columbia.


BRITISH COLUMBIA
BC Small Business Accord
We are in business to create the most small business friendly jurisdiction in Canada
Goal
Principles

Championed by the Roundtable in 2012, the Accord was developed through consultation with over 35,000 participants.

Roundtable Chair

Serving the Small Business Sector

Chaired by the Honourable Coralee Oakes, Minister of Small Business, Red Tape Reduction and Minister Responsible for the Liquor Distribution Branch, the Roundtable is a permanent board established in 2005 to serve the small business community as its 'Voice to Government'. We are small business leaders from across the province who meet regularly to represent our regions and economic sectors in order to provide advice to government to further the interests of the small business community.

What We Do

The Four Pillars of the Roundtable are:

1. Human Resources and Education
2. Regulatory Reform and Red Tape Reduction
3. Economic Growth; and
4. Small Business Issues

The success and longevity of the Roundtable can be attributed to the role members play to:

- engage in a dialogue with small business to identify key issues and opportunities;
- develop recommendations to government and to small business owners on strategies to improve B.C.'s small business climate;
- identify and undertake selected initiatives to enhance the competitiveness of the small business sector; and
- advocate for small business interests in the province.

We discuss small business concerns and opportunities of the day with government leaders, elected and unelected, as well as organizations that are seeking Roundtable support and feedback to create awareness of initiatives that drive small business growth and success.

Roundtable Chair, Honourable Coralee Oakes, Minister of Small Business, Red Tape Reduction and Minister Responsible for the Liquor Distribution Branch

A Message from the Roundtable

We are pleased to bring to you the Small Business Roundtable's 11th Annual Report to Government. The permanent Small Business Roundtable (Roundtable), established in 2005, is focused on helping government take action to drive small business growth and success in recognition of the small business community's significant contribution to support economic growth, productivity and innovation throughout British Columbia.

Taking action means that government program leaders consult with the Roundtable to ensure that small business needs are being considered when initiatives and policies are being reviewed, contemplated or nearing implementation. Small business success is critical to the province's economic well-being, accounting for ***98%*** of businesses and ***55%*** of private sector jobs. Small businesses employed over one million people in British Columbia in 2015. According to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB), British Columbia 's small business confidence has been among the highest in the country for two years now.

Considerable efforts have been made to establish British Columbia as the "Most Small Business Friendly Jurisdiction in Canada," however, we acknowledge with the encouragement of our Chair, the Honourable Coralee Oakes, that we cannot risk being complacent. For 2016 the Roundtable pressed government for a robust small business checklist to support ministries as they assess the impact of regulatory changes; recommended various measures including enhancements to the Canada-B.C. Job Grant to help offset costs related to the minimum wage increase; advised the Ministry of Finance that improvements to the tax treatment of exporters are needed; and encouraged municipalities, First Nations and Regional Districts to participate in the 2016 Open for Business Awards.

In this report, we summarize what we heard at our three regional consultations this year, detail progress made on key Roundtable priorities and make recommendations on what government and small business owners can do to drive small business growth and success based on the Four Pillars of the Roundtable: Human Resources and Education; Regulatory Reform and Red Tape Reduction; Economic Growth; and Small Business Issues.

Building on programs such as BizPaL and the Mobile Business Licence, the Roundtable's Open for Business Awards recognize that economic growth is a shared responsibility of all levels of government, including First Nations. In the spirit of innovation, the Roundtable supports youth entrepreneurship training programs such as the Roundtable-sponsored Aboriginal Business Circles Pilot aimed at getting new, innovative business ideas to market from British Columbia's younger Aboriginal generations. To support community resiliency, the "Open for Business Awards: Best Practices Guide" identifies innovative small business friendly initiatives that make it easier to do business in communities. The Roundtable continues to advocate for the implementation of BC Small Business Accord-aligned 'Grade A' initiatives detailed in our previous report to make B.C. the best place to start, operate, grow and sell a business.

We would like to thank our departed Roundtable members, Jon Garson and Chief Councillor Ellis Ross who left us over the course of the last year. We welcome our newest member Val Litwin, incoming President and CEO of the BC Chamber of Commerce.

Chief Ellis Ross

Jon Garson

Coquitlam Consultation 2016

TAKING ACTION:
Human Resources and Education

- The **Building Skills for Small Business Fund (2007 to present)** has provided over $1 million for projects such as the Aboriginal Business Circles (ABC) Program, a partnership between Community Futures Development Corporation of Central Interior First Nations and Junior Achievement BC. Officially announced in September 2016, the ABC Pilot Project will introduce JABC's *Be Entrepreneurial* program to youth in eight Aboriginal communities. *Be Entrepreneurial* coaches students to develop and present plans for their own businesses, while helping them develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to create a business plan and envision launching a business of their own.

- **Junior Achievement of British Columbia (JABC) (2005 to present)** is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to educating youth about business and has received $5 million in total funding from the Province since 2006. This year, JABC created the "Celebrating Entrepreneurship Award" in partnership with the Ministry of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction. The award recognizes the student company that demonstrates the most innovation in their business, and provides a $3,000 cash prize to support the growth of their business.

- The **Starting a Small Business Guide** and **Import/Export Guide (ongoing)** are used by small business stakeholders, educational and banking institutions to help those planning or starting a small business. They provide essential information as well as links to additional resources to help ensure a new business is successful. The Small Business Roundtable provided input in to the guides helping to ensure the information addresses the questions and concerns of small business owners. The guides are also available online translated in four languages, including Punjabi, Chinese (simplified and traditional) and Korean.

- The **Labour Market and Information Division (LMID)** organized 13 information sessions or roundtables for 644 participants in 12 sectors. Each roundtable was co-hosted by industry associations and employers to create awareness of and stimulate engagement about how sectors can access skilled labour and satisfy human resource requirements. The LMID hosted several community solutions roundtables held on May 25 in Salmon Arm, June 9 in Sidney and June 17 in Langford.

- People with disabilities represent an important and largely untapped talent pool. **Accessibility 2024** – B.C.'s action plan to become the most progressive province in Canada for people with disabilities – encourages small businesses to hire more people with disabilities to meet their business needs. The President's Group – an advisory group of B.C. business leaders – is working in partnership with British Columbia businesses to improve supports for employers by developing mechanisms and standards that are effective for employers to hire more people with disabilities.

(l-r) Jan Bell-Irving, JABC; Geri Collins, Community Futures; The Honourable Shirley Bond, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour; Jordan Lowe, owner of Fresh Slice Pizza in Prince George; Edie Frederick, Lheidli T'enneh FirstNation; and the Honourable Mike Morris, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General attend the Prince George Youth Aboriginal Business Circles Pilot Program launch.

TAKING ACTION:
Regulatory Reform and Red Tape Reduction

- The **BizPaL Program (2006 to present)**: BizPaL is a unique partnership between federal, provincial, territorial, municipal and now First Nations governments which allows small business owners to quickly and easily identify the permits and licences thy need, helping them focus on business growth and job creation. This free online service saves entrepreneurs time spent searching and helps them start their businesses faster. In the last year the program has expanded to include 129 community partners.

- **Red Tape Reduction Day held on March 2, 2016, was the first-ever Red Tape Reduction Day in British Columbia and in Canada**. To celebrate Red Tape Reduction Day, 37 outdated or unnecessary regulations were repealed, removing more than 200 regulatory requirements for British Columbians. Red tape reduction is supported by the Roundtable and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB).

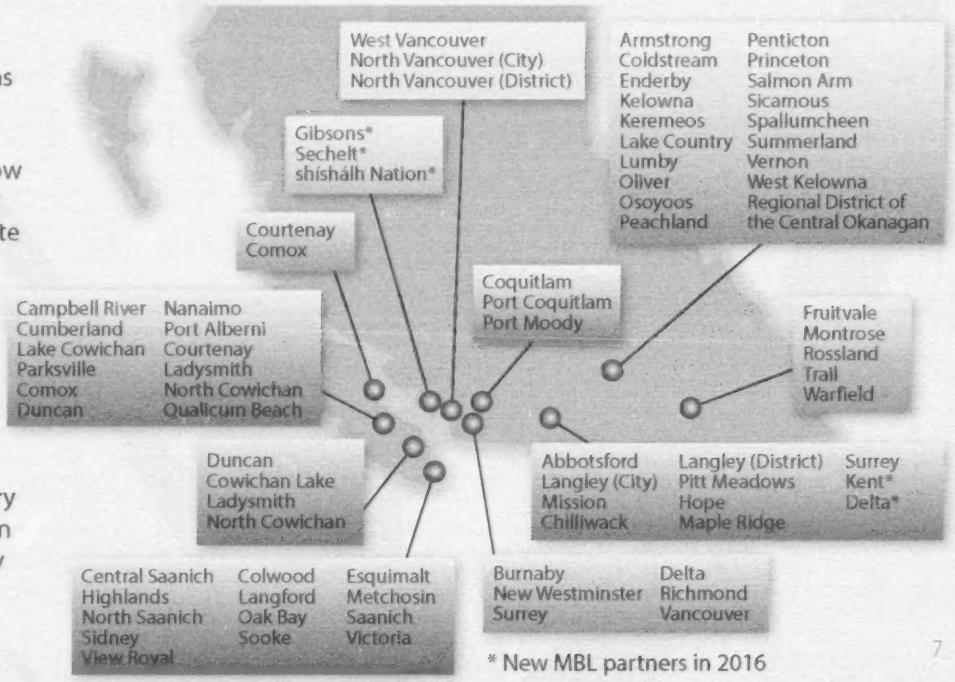
- **Red Tape Reduction Button (2016)**: Over a six-week period in the fall of 2015, British Columbians were asked to submit their ideas on how to reduce red tape and enhance service delivery. Over 400 ideas were received during the engagement – from minor concerns to complicated challenges, along with suggestions on how to address these irritants. To continue the conversation, a 'Help Cut Red Tape' button was added to the government of B.C. main website page. Every idea submitted to government is reviewed by the appropriate ministry.

- The **Franchises Act (2015)** will come into force in B.C. once the regulations, including the details of the disclosure requirements, are complete and approved and when the franchise and legal communities have had time to adapt to the new law. Standardizing legislation for franchises across Canada is supported by the Roundtable as it can help minimize the regulatory burden for small business franchisors and provide better protection for small business franchisees. The Act will also help bring certainty to investors looking to expand into British Columbia, as there is currently no such legislation in the province.

- The **Starting a Restaurant in BC (2015 to present)** initiative has expanded to include the development of a pilot program in association with BizPaL that will be provide time and cost information for aspiring restaurateurs within B.C.

- The **Mobile Business Licence (MBL) Program (2005 to present):** Roundtable members continue to advocate for a single-licence to reduce red tape and simplify the licencing process in participating regions. The Mobile Business Licence program, expanded over the past year, has seen:
  - two pilot agreements in the Lower Mainland become permanent
  - two new communities join the Fraser Valley Agreement, and
  - a new MBL agreement involving the Town of Gibsons, District of Sechelt and shíshálh Nation.

Mobile Business Licence Program Participants



* New MBL partners in 2016

TAKING ACTION:
Economic Growth

- The **Open for Business Awards** have celebrated the achievements of 30 communities since the awards began in 2011 as the Most Small Business Friendly Community Awards. The 2016 Open for Business Awards is now open to Regional Districts to participate and compete against local municipalities and First Nation communities on a regional basis. In the **Open for Business Awards: Best Practices Guide** we highlighted measures that set the 2013 and 2014 winners and finalists apart. This Guide will be updated in 2016 to include Best Practices from First Nation Communities and Regional Districts.

- **Minimum Wage Adjustment (2016)** was recently addressed by the Province. The Roundtable advocated for offsets to address increases that are not tied to the Consumer Price Index. For the 2016 increase, the Province provided $130,000 to fund training advisory services for small business that wish to access the Canada-B.C. Job Grant to help their small business grow and succeed.

- **Competitiveness Metrics (underway)** The province is in the process of developing a framework for assessing the competitiveness of Jobs Plan sectors which includes the Small Business sector to enable:
  - Informed policies and programs to address competitiveness challenges
  - Improved competitiveness by identifying and prioritizing growth opportunities

- At the **LNG-in-BC Conference**, held in Vancouver, government delivered programing to better connect B.C.'s small business community to the LNG opportunity:
  a. an Aboriginal Business Development Forum, giving Aboriginal business leaders an opportunity to voice their concerns and perspectives around First Nations and Aboriginal business participation in major projects, such as LNG projects;
  b. Business to Business (B2B) sessions supporting direct business networking between B.C. businesses and LNG project proponents and contractors; and
  c. Sponsorship of more than 90 B.C. businesses as exhibitors at the Conference Trade Show.

  The Province has developed and released an LNG-Buy BC Business Kit. The business kit highlights information and resources that B.C. companies will find helpful as they pursue LNG opportunities.

Nanaimo Consultation 2016 with Minister Oakes and Roundtable members Angie Barnard and Sam Howard

TAKING ACTION:
Small Business Issues

- **Small Business Awareness Strategy (ongoing)** continues to be supported through the development of Small Business resources, the new Aboriginal Small Business Resource Handout (released at the September 2016 B.C. Cabinet – First Nations Leader's Gathering), the Small Business Lens and Regulatory Reform Lens. Tools are developed to support small businesses by adding additional resources, updating our websites and continually developing supporting toolkits.

- The **Venture Connect Project (2013 to present)** was originally established as a co-funded federal and provincial government pilot project, to provide preparation and matching services to business buyers and sellers, to help keep viable businesses in their communities. Venture Connect has connected 434 buyers with sellers since the beginning of 2016, already exceeding the 2015 total of 321. Venture Connect is now self-sustaining, no longer requiring public funds to provide resources and tools to help business owners with succession planning.

- **Business Walks (ongoing)** offer an excellent opportunity for local leaders and representatives to connect with businesses face-to-face in an informal way. Communities are becoming better equipped to support and stimulate economic activity due to the business walks program by identifying common themes for action and discovering the pulse of their community. The Roundtable is pleased to have supported Kelowna's 2016 Business Walk.

- The **New Business Welcome Letter (2015)** was created in October 2015 for entrepreneurs who register their business through the OneStop B.C. Business Registry. The letter includes valuable resources such as the **British Columbia's Small Business Resource Guide** that provides helpful information to help start, manage and grow a business. Over 22,000 welcome letters have been sent out as of the release of this report.

Kelowna Consultation 2016 with Minister Norm Letnick and Roundtable member Ashley Ramsay

- **Regional Consultations (2005 to present)** with over 1,200 individuals have been conducted by the Roundtable for a total of 56 consultation events since 2005. Three regional consultations were held by the Roundtable in 2016 to continue to gather input and feedback from their small business networks and report this feedback at Roundtable meetings, informing other members, holding discussions and creating recommendations.

- **Tax Competitiveness (2005)** continues to be promoted by our members in order to maintain B.C.'s status as having one of the lowest corporate tax rates in North America. The Roundtable is working with the Ministry of Finance to engage with the Commission on Tax Competitiveness.

- The **Climate Leadership Plan** reinforces B.C.'s global leadership in reducing harmful greenhouse gas emissions while continuing to grow the economy and create jobs for B.C. families.
  - Because of these actions, up to 66,000 green jobs are being created over the next ten years, and B.C. is reducing its net annual greenhouse gas emissions by up to 25 million tonnes below current forecasts by 2050.
  - Emissions will be reduced even further as subsequent actions are introduced, putting B.C. on course to achieve its 2050 target of an 80% reduction in emissions from 2007 levels.

MEETING OUR MANDATE

Human Resources and Education

What We Have Heard

The Canada-B.C. Job Grant is a key program for social-minded and growth-oriented businesses. To ensure this program grows the workforce and strengthens communities there is a need to build communications to better connect talent with marketable skills as well as small businesses committed to building skilled employees internally. The best training happens on-site and government and communities can learn from Whistler as they are doing a great job finding workers by developing a resort learning program. Many small business owners appreciate that they need to access new markets to grow their business, but do not know how to do it. They lean heavily on their peers, clients and industry to innovate, so there is a role for businesses, local chambers and governments to foster hub creation to pull growth-oriented businesses together. Junior Achievement BC, Futurpreneur and the Women's Enterprise Centre, where the Province has provided partnership funding to deliver their mentorship and business training programs, can play a role.

Priorities for 2016

- The Small Business Roundtable funded a study the first year of the Canada-B.C. Job Grant to better position year-two of the grant for small business owners.
  - The study helped to identify strategies to make it easier for small business owners to find training resources to meet their needs through Small Business BC. As a result of this study, small business owners in remote communities can now have their travel costs covered. Additionally, the employer share of the training for employers sponsoring an unemployed person will be covered by the grant once the newly trained employee is hired.
  - The Roundtable helped facilitate SBBC's role as a Canada-B.C. Job Grant Delivery Partner.
- Some employers have had difficulty finding employees for openings in BC Jobs Plan sectors, such as tourism and technology, because of federal restrictions on Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker program.
  - We advocated for ways to make it easier for small businesses to connect employers with screened and assessed workers. The Roundtable sees an opportunity for local community and business leaders to leverage the Employment Program of BC to help grow the local apprenticeship pool, develop community employer partnerships to fund job creation, and subsidize unemployed individuals who are in need of specific work experience (e.g. clerical, trades, sales, transportation).
- The construction industry has found it difficult to recruit the necessary tradespeople for the numerous projects underway in the province and smaller retail and hospitality industries are having difficulty attracting employees.
  - We are leveraging our networks to create awareness of programs hosted by WorkBC.ca that match small businesses with workers wanting to become qualified employees.

Aboriginal Business Success Story – Interior B.C.

Kekuli Café

"Don't Panic... We Have Bannock!

Sharon Bond-Hogg knew she would franchise her business from day one, and now the requests are rolling in from all around British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and as far away as Ontario.

"I didn't start out thinking Kekuli Café would be an Indigenous restaurant," Sharon said, ***"but the need and demand was there."***

To read more about Kekuli Café's journey to success, **click here**.

Many of BC's small businesses start as micro businesses (less than five employees) and provide employment opportunities for local residents, allowing them to work close to home.

Resources to Identify and Develop Talent

BRITISH COLUMBIA WorkBC.ca

www.workbc.ca

Junior Achievement CANADA

www.british-columbia.jacan.org

futurpreneur canada
fuel for young enterprise

www.rockmybusinessplan.ca

WOMEN'S ENTERPRISE CENTRE

www.womensenterprise.ca

ita
YOUR TICKET.

www.itabc.ca

Celebrate Entrepreneurship – Waft wins inaugural award!

Junior Achievement CANADA

Youth entrepreneurship is going strong in the Lower Mainland. Waft is a student-led company that produces air fresheners from natural ingredients. The air fresheners were handmade by all the students; initially targeting the smelly lockers of their high school peers, they quickly expanded their targets to include cars and offices. The products were packaged to sell at school, to friends and family, and at local craft fairs. The air fresheners were designed to inspire feelings of happiness and positive energy.

Waft was awarded the 2016 "Celebrate Entrepreneurship Award," sponsored by the Ministry of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction. Waft was honoured in front of 100 guests at Junior Achievement (JA) B.C.'s annual Celebrate JA! event where JA students around the province are recognized and celebrated for their achievements in a JA program.

Waft donated 10% of their net proceeds to the Create Change Foundation, a Vancouver-based non profit that works to find innovative ways to combat extreme poverty by supporting thousands of girls in Northern Ghana through high school and university.

JABC president Jan Bell-Irving with Waft's VP and Director of Finance as they win their award, including $3,000 to support the growth of their business.

Micro businesses often support other local small businesses and ensure a significant portion of money, goods and services remain in their communities.

MEETING OUR MANDATE

Regulatory Reform and Red Tape Reduction

What We Have Heard

British Columbia is facing a significant demographic shift, and as a consequence government and small businesses must be more nimble to adapt. To best position the economy for growth, improved productivity and innovation all levels of government should research ways they can standardize red tape from community-to-community like they have in New Zealand. Housing and transportation can be made more affordable if zoning, licencing, permitting and inspections practices and frameworks are streamlined and made more consistent, especially within the economic region. Removing excessive red tape and barriers to interprovincial trade is a shared priority, and all levels of government can do a better job of working with industry before any new red tape is introduced. Establishing Mobile Business Licence Agreements within the region is a great relationship-building strategy for communities, demonstrating that governments appreciate and understand small business red tape issues.

Priorities for 2016

- Regulatory Reform BC, through its 2015/16 Regulatory Reform Annual Report, highlights government's efforts to modernize regulation, streamline processes and enhance service and access for business and citizens.
  - The suggestion button placed on the B.C. government main home page allows citizens and small business owners to share their ideas on red tape priorities so they can be reviewed with the Ministry of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction.
  - The Roundtable advocated for a renewed government commitment to a small business lens that can be readily applied by government program and policy leads to assess the impact of any changes they are considering on small businesses.
  - Several of our board members represent organizations whose members are very clear about the red tape which is impacting them most. Where new fees or taxes are involved, we are advocating for more consultation with small business owners before these programs are launched (e.g. LNG-Buy BC).
- We are continually working within our communities to expand the reach of the Open for Business Awards, Mobile Business Licences and BizPaL into new communities as small businesses are disproportionally affected by regulation and government processes. In 2016, for the first time, Regional Districts were invited to participate in the 2016 Open for Business Awards to profile their leadership and successes related to making it easier for business to do business in their communities.
  - We are pleased to see first-time Open for Business Award submissions from the Cariboo Regional District, Central Okanagan Regional District and the Township of Esquimalt.
  - The Roundtable is focused on trying to establish a Mobile Business Licence in Northern B.C. to build on its recent agreement with in the Sunshine Coast.
- We are working with other small business stakeholders and our networks to improve awareness of business education and advisory services such as those provided by Small Business BC and the Employers' Advisor Office which can help owners prepare and manage red tape effectively.

Innovation Success Story – Interior B.C.

Firehall Brewery *"The Beer of Wine Country"*

The former *Oliver Wine and Welcome Centre* ironically lost its VQA wine licence... for not selling enough wine!

Micro businesses also have the ability to be nimble and innovative, reacting quickly to changing market trends.

Sid Ruhland, owner of the Firehall Brewery, agrees that, yes, perhaps a wine store in the midst of 40 wineries or so wasn't the greatest business model. Which is why he opened a brewery. "***Every day requires creativity and innovation*** in order to get 40 hours worth of work done in about 10. Small businesses only have so many hands."

To learn more about Sid's unique brewery, **click here**.

Resources that make it easier to do business

SMALL BUSINESS BC

www.smallbusinessbc.ca

BizPaL

Business starts here

www.bcbizpal.ca

BCeID

www.bceid.ca

BCIC

BC INNOVATION COUNCIL

www.bcic.ca

BizPaL continues to push forward, engaging with communities, and creating partnerships throughout the province.

Congratulations to 11 new BizPaL communities:

- District of Wells
- Village of Slocan
- Village of Salmo
- Village of Silverton
- Village of Clinton
- Village of Chase
- Village of Pouce Coupe
- Village of New Denver
- Capital Regional District
- District of Oak Bay
- Tsawwassen First Nation

For the first time in Canada, four levels of government coming together to support B.C. Small Business

BizPaL

On March 29, 2016, a BizPaL event was hosted by the Tsawwassen First Nation to announce 11 new participants signed on with B.C. BizPaL. One of these communities was Tsawwassen First Nation making them the first First Nation community in Canada to become part of the program. To date, there are 129 community partners in the BizPaL initiative.

The Honourable Coralee Oakes, Minister of Small Business and Red Tape Reduction and Responsible for the Liquor Distribution Branch; with (l-r) Tony Jacobs, Owner of Raven Excavation; Chief Bryce Williams, Tsawwassen First Nation; the Honourable Bardish Chagger, federal Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister of Small Business and Tourism; and George Hunter, CEO of Small Business BC.

MEETING OUR MANDATE

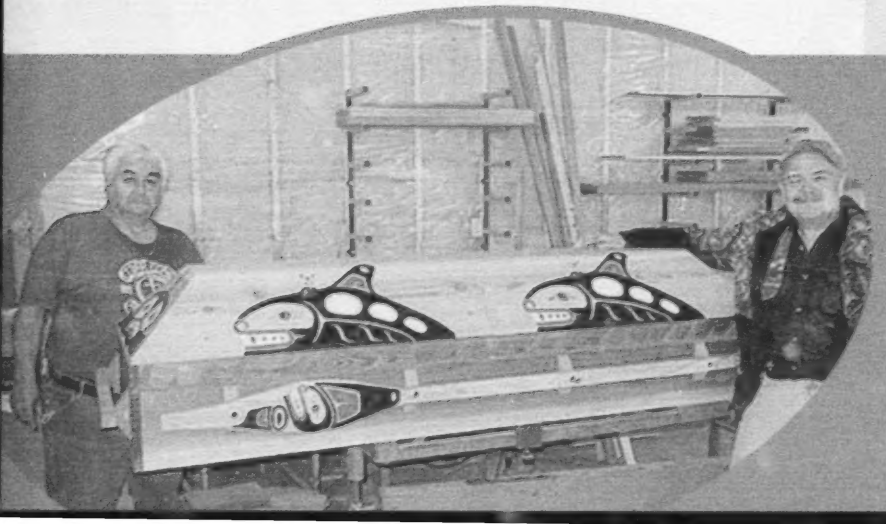
Economic Growth

What We Have Heard

Growth is a choice and not necessarily a goal for every small business. Although small business confidence is strong across British Columbia some sectors of the economy are challenged, particularly in the North where some areas of the natural resource sector are facing a commodity downturn. Therefore, it is more important than ever to 'get to yes' on projects that are regional economic development priorities. Existing businesses with retiring owners are at risk of closing if owners and local communities don't undertake succession planning. Overseas talent tied to Canadian companies have a hard time coming into the country to deliver time sensitive projects. Finding ways for small businesses across B.C. to hire and retain local and foreign students is a challenge for all regions. There is a concern that small businesses are not able to absorb further cost pressures without having to reduce staffing.

Priorities for 2016

- At the October 2014 Aboriginal Small Business Consultation, it was evident that partnerships between non-Aboriginal firms and First Nations boost regional economic growth, and that the role of Aboriginal small businesses in economic development is a source of pride in the communities where they are based.
  - We are financially supporting the Aboriginal Business Circles (ABC) Pilot Project to be jointly delivered by Community Futures Development Corporation of Central Interior First Nations and Junior Achievement BC to support youth entrepreneurship in eight communities.
- Clear, flexible and simplified guidelines on what is and is not taxable, as it relates to PST remittance policies, require continual diligence and enhancement to maintain competitiveness with taxation regimes in other jurisdictions.
  - The Roundtable is soliciting feedback from our networks on tax policy priorities for discussion with the Commission on Tax Competitiveness.
- The Roundtable has hosted several Ministry of International Trade presentations to help small businesses build their capacity to become export-ready. Major concerns identified by exporters are related to overcoming language barriers and battling fraud.
  - A new export strategy is needed to address concerns that front-end services are offered in pockets which are not easily accessible to small business. Many businesses are relying on accountants to navigate regulations and processes.
  - We believe that e-commerce training and establishing a BizPaL–model for exporters, where all requirements for exporters are assembled, will help empower small businesses looking to navigate growth outside of their local market.



Aboriginal Business Success Story – Coastal B.C.

Cedar Journeys Caskets

Former logger, Tom Simpson, taught himself to build burial caskets, making 30 to 36 a year and creating a job for himself and a part-time apprentice.

His advice for would-be entrepreneurs is simple.
"Be passionate and believe in yourself. Anything can happen."

To learn more about Tom's handmade caskets, including traditional Coast Salish artwork, **click here**.

Unconstrained by bureaucracy, micro-business entrepreneurs are able to develop and adapt their products and services to the needs of their local community.

Resources that foster a progressive business environment

CANADA STARTS HERE

BC JOBS PLAN

www.bcjobsplan.ca

Regulatory Reform BC Annual Report

Open for Business Best Practices Guide

OPEN for BUSINESS Award

2016 Winners

Delta
Mainland/Southwest Region

Telkwa
Nechako Region

Lake Country
Thompson/Okanagan Region

Victoria
Vancouver Island/Coast Region

Nisga'a Lisims Government
North Coast Region

Congratulations to this year's winners!

What the small business community is saying about the 2016 winners:

Delta
The beautification of Delta Street along with the enhancements to the atmosphere of being in the village will certainly have a positive effect to the small businesses in Ladner.

Lake Country
We are continually impressed with the hands on approach the District continues to show in an effort to bring local business, residents and the community together.

Telkwa
Telkwa's re-evaluation of their regulations and licensing has been an important ingredient in the success of our business.

Victoria
As a new business owner in Victoria, we were delighted to discover the City of Victoria's business hub... It was a big weight off our shoulders having someone to help navigate the process of permits, licensing.

Nisga'a Lisims Government
Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC and the Nisga'a Lisims Government are working together on building a Regional Tourism Masterplan to foster economic and professional development advancement in the tourism industry in the Nation.

MEETING OUR MANDATE

Small Business Issues

What We Have Heard

At the three Regional Consultations we were pleased to hear from several small business owners that the **Small Business Resource Guide** is an excellent resource they wish they had when they embarked on their first business enterprise. Small businesses are not easily able to access the capital they need from the retail banking industry and are increasingly looking elsewhere to find other financial sources to operate and grow their business. Although Aboriginal tourism is a tremendous success story that all British Columbians should be proud of, many Aboriginal entrepreneurs on and off reserve are having trouble participating in the economy. To help grow small businesses, especially in First Nations communities, government needs to consult with the business community as soon as possible when major policy shifts are being considered (e.g. CPP, LNG, Taxation, Climate Action). All elected and unelected government officials can do their part to improve the business climate by appreciating that small businesses do not have the capacity to overcome complicated and inconsistent requirements related to reporting, training, inspection, licensing and procurement.

Small Business BC and Venture Connect are key resources that support small business owners looking to start and exit their business.

Priorities for 2016

- The downturn in the commodities market (coal and natural gas) as well as a decrease in the Forestry Annual Allowable Cut is having a significant impact on resource communities. The Roundtable continues to consult with small businesses in their communities to better understand priorities and diversification opportunities as these communities work to overcome related challenges.
  - We are encouraging government to work with large proponents to identify skills needs and advocate for programs that can build the skills capacity for the workforce, including trades and business skills training.
  - Continue to improve internet infrastructure so high technology opportunities can be better realized.
- Running a business takes time. In 2015, 25% of those self-employed worked more than 50 hours a week. It is often difficult for small business owners to find the time to research government programs and services or reach out to service providers.
  - For 2016, three Regional consultations were held in Coquitlam, Nanaimo and Kelowna to determine where growth-oriented small business owners go to seek information make their business more resilient and innovative.
- Succession planning continues to be a business retention and expansion priority in smaller communities, especially for traditional, family-run businesses. Access to capital is a concern for small business owners looking to sell or retire.
  - The Roundtable is working at the community level so that small business owners within their networks are aware of succession planning resources accessible through organizations such as Community Futures and Venture Connect as well as BritishColumbia.ca to help link investors to a wide array of British Columbia enterprises.

venture connect

Key online portals to the Roundtable and Government

BRITISH COLUMBIA'S
Small Business Roundtable

smallbusinessroundtable.ca

@SBRoundtableBC

Community Futures British Columbia
Growing communities one idea at a time.

www.communityfutures.ca

British Columbia's Small Business Resources

Technology Success Story – Coastal B.C.

Smart Dolphins IT Solutions

Starting a business involves taking risks; growing a business takes even more risks. Dave Monahan, President of Smart Dolphins IT Solutions, has taken many calculated risks over the past 16 years.

"Communication is very important - take advantage of industry-specific peer groups and mentors."

Taking his own advice, Dave has managed to structure his company in a way that enables him to reach his goals of providing fulsome IT infrastructure service, while maintaining healthy work-life balances for himself as well as his staff.

To learn more about Dave's proactive outlook on the IT industry, **click here**.

Manufacturing Success Story – Interior B.C.

Interior Stainless

Welder Jim Ure started making beer tanks in his garage in 1999, after spending the previous eight years learning to custom-make tanks while working for someone else. So, when it was time to start his own business, he already had the manufacturing expertise.

"I paid attention to the details," Jim explains.

To date, he has exported numerous tanks and hardware to breweries (and some wineries) in over a dozen states and multiple countries.

To learn more about Jim's experience with exporting his beer tanks, **click here**.

Micro businesses are often created and run by entrepreneurs with unique talents that either wouldn't fit or be feasible in larger businesses.

Recommendations to Government

Human Resources and Education

- **Growth**
  Encourage local governments to post the Small Business Resource Guide on their websites where business licences are purchased and encourage One-Stop Business registries to also post the Resource Guide where incorporated businesses file their annual report to make it readily available for existing businesses.
- **Productivity & Innovation**
  Explore if there are feasible opportunities to provide training subsidies through the Canada-BC Job Grant to pilot in-house training programs for existing small business employees that lack other viable external training options

Regulatory Reform and Red Tape Reduction

- **Growth**
  At a future Aboriginal Small Business Meeting find ways with key program staff at the federal and provincial level find ways to make it easier for Aboriginal small businesses on-reserve and off-reserve to participate in the economy.
- **Productivity & Innovation**
  Through the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training's 'Workforce Roundtables' for the Technology, Trucking and LNG sectors, government will work to streamline processes that help growth-oriented firms access high skilled foreign talent to deliver time-sensitive projects.

Economic Growth

- **Growth**
  Market how British Columbia is the best place in Canada to start, operate, grow and sell a business (e.g. technology companies are looking at rural B.C.)
- **Productivity & Innovation**
  Encourage the Union of BC Municipalities and the BC Chamber of Commerce to develop local strategies in support of e-commerce adoption in rural communities and use the Technology Summit to highlight how technology is improving back room business practices such as HR, Bookkeeping, Inventory & Project Management and Business Development.

Small Business Issues

- **Growth**
  Future non-CPI minimum wage increases, beyond those announced in 2016, should not be considered until the committed Small Business Tax Rate has been reduced from 2.5% to 1.5%.
- **Productivity & Innovation**
  Policy and program leads should continue to identify growth-oriented firms on the Job Makers website as these companies are most likely to seek out expansion opportunities (e.g. exporters).

Minister Oakes celebrating the release of the Regulatory Reform Annual Report with Iain MacNeil (SVP of Global Sales Innovation Technologies) and Laura Jones (Executive Vice President of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business).

Human Resources and Education

- Connect with Small Business BC to seek assistance to access the Canada-B.C. Job Grant (CJG). The CJG is a program that assists B.C. employers to invest in employee training and access up to $15,000 per employee per fiscal year, enabling small business owners and entrepreneurs with their training, hiring and retention strategies.
  - SBBC can help businesses develop a training plan, identify training opportunities, explain the CJG eligibility requirements and assist in completion an application. This year's criteria also includes potential travel reimbursement for applicants that reside in remote communities.

Regulatory Reform and Red Tape Reduction

- Review the 2015/16 Regulatory Reform Annual Report and share your red tape challenges and suggestions with the Roundtable as we work with government program and policy leads to address red tape reduction opportunities by sector (e.g. health, technology, environment) and advocate for Mobile Business Licence expansion into communities north of Kamloops.
  - By sending a detailed email to **RoundtableSecretariat@gov.bc.ca** our Red Tape Committee will raise your issue with our Chair, Minister Coralee Oakes for further action as appropriate.

Economic Growth

- Help Junior Achievement British Columbia (JABC) partner with local schools and business owners to deliver youth entrepreneurship programs. JABC needs local business leaders to assist with business education programs that teach work readiness, entrepreneurship and financial literacy to elementary, middle school and high school students throughout the province.
  - To help JABC reach Aboriginal youth we provided an additional $34,300 in funding to JABC and the Community Futures – Central Interior First Nations Economic Development Corporation to launch the Aboriginal Business Circles youth entrepreneurship pilot training in eight communities.

Small Business Issues

- Share the *Small Business Roundtable's Open for Business Awards: Best Practices Guide* with your local elected officials and Chamber of Commerce to encourage them to apply for Spring 2017 and identify proven strategies and collaboration opportunties that can help make your community more open for business. The guide was released in 2015 and details small business friendly initiatives by award winners and finalists who best demonstrate they are operating within the spirit of the Accord principles.
  - For the 2016 Open for Business Awards, 20 communities, including Regional Districts and First Nations provided submissions and competed with each other on a regional basis: **https://www.smallbusinessroundtable.ca/Home/Open-for-Business-Awards.aspx**

Commitments Moving Forward...

1. Continue to advocate for Roundtable 'Grade A' initiatives (detailed in the Roundtable's 10th Annual Report) to support youth entrepreneurship; improved internet infrastructure and enhanced-mobile business licence framework throughout B.C.; and a new small business friendly inter-provincial trade agreement.

2. Engage in a robust dialogue with the Commission on Tax Competiveness to improve the tax climate for small business.

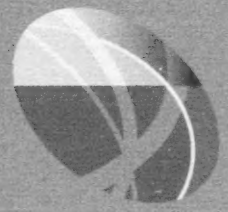
3. Work with government to support efforts to make small businesses more "export ready."

4. Host the Roundtable's fifth Aboriginal Small Business Meeting during the Premiers Natural Resource Forum in February 2017.

5. Refresh the *Open for Business Awards: Best Practices Guide* with best practices from First Nations and Regional Districts.

6. Identify ways small business can engage in the Climate Action Plan and the BC Tech Strategy.

7. Look for red tape reduction opportunities by sector (e.g. health, technology, environment).



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